Delayed railway projects

*18. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ongoing works and projects of railways in the country which have not been completed on their original scheduled time and have been delayed;

(b) the reasons therefor in each case;

(c) the remedial measures taken; and

(d) by when those works would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a), (b) and (d) Railways have a huge throwforward of ongoing projects, under new lines, gauge conversions, doublings, railway electrifications and metropolitan transport projects, with limited availability of resources, as a result of which the projects take long time in completion. The targets for the projects are generally fixed on yearly basis based on the availability of resources and progress and many of the projects get completed in phases. Some of the projects where targets had been fixed and projects would have completed in full but have been delayed are given in the Annexure alongwith reasons for delay and the revised targets. [*See* Appendix 215 Annexure No.1. The main reasons for delay have been paucity of funds, delay in land acquisition and forestry clearance, failure of contracts, adverse law and order conditions and other market forces affecting the progress. With the present availability of funds and the large throwforward, it is not possible to fix and maintain many targets.

(c) Some of the steps taken to expedite implementation of ongoing projects are:-

(i) The availability of funds for the projects have increased considerably over the last few years due to provision of funds through internal generation, additional funds for National Projects, participation by State Governments and beneficiaries and implementation of projects by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited through extra budgetary resources.

(ii) The contract conditions have been modified to bring in efficiency in contract management.

(iii) Empowerment of field units with delegation of powers.

(iv) Pursuing the security issues and land acquisition with the State Governments.

(v) State Governments have been requested to regularly review the projects and sort out the pending issues.

Price control of drugs

†*19. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all medicines manufactured from 72 basic medicines prescribed under the Drug Price Control Order, 1995 come under the purview of price control;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is also a fact that some companies are overcharging for three hundred twelve drug formulae that come under the purview of price control in the market;

(c) if so, since when these drug manufacturing companies are overcharging the price of drugs and the excess amount charged by them from the public so far;

(d) whether National Drugs Pricing Authority (NPPA) has ordered for recovery from these drug manufacturing companies; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The prices of 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO' 95) and the formulations based thereon are regulated in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO' 95, which are being administered through the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).

(b) and (c) The detection of cases of overcharging in violation of provisions of DPCO' 95 is a continuous process. Since the inception of NPPA in August 1997 and till 31st January 2009, NPPA have issued demand notices in 614 cases for overcharging to the companies for recovery of an amount of Rs.1954.53 crore. So far, Rs. 140.87 crore has been realized. Recoveries amounting to Rs.1773.91 crore are *sub-judice* in various Courts. The major amount is under litigation and the recovery of the same depends upon the outcome of the Court cases.

(d) and (e) NPPA has so far initiated Recovery proceedings in 39 cases, which have been referred to the Collectors of the districts in various states for Recovery of an amount of Rs.110.22 Crores.

Decrease in the agricultural land

†*20.SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during last few years there has been a decrease in the land under cultivation in the country due to use of agricultural land for other purposes;

(b) if so, yearly average of reduction in agricultural land from 2004 to 2008; and

(c) the names of States and the quantum of reduction area in each of them?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) As per available estimates, there is a marginal decline in agricultural land from 182.586 million ha. in 2003-04 to 182.195 million ha. in 2006-07 due to increase in population and diversion of agricultural land for non agricultural purposes such as urbanization, roads, industries etc.

(b) In last four years (2003-07), the annual average reduction in agricultural land is about 97,750 ha.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.